

Charleston Tragedy Must Unite Not Divide Us

On the evening of June 17, 2015, a shooting massacre at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina left nine dead.

“Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Charleston community has shown love and unity can prevail over hate and division. Charleston nicknamed “the holy city” because of its large number of churches, is living by the words of Dr. King and is showing the world that violence is not the answer. In many news stories reported, the common trait is that the people of Charleston have risen to the challenge and are healing after this tragedy.

Counties across this country have shown their empathy for the families of the shooting victims holding prayer vigils and/or church services like this; “Stories were shared, tears were shed and prayers were given Friday night at the McCormick Arts Council Park where McCormick residents and neighbors gathered to honor and remember those slain June 17th at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston. Over 200 people attended a vigil hosted by the McCormick County Ministerial Alliance and the McCormick County Community Relations Council.” *Taken from an article in the Index-Journal by Amanda Blanton.* A number of Community Relations Councils (CRC) including Berkeley County’s CRC participated in prayer vigils in their communities.

How can a Community Relations Council help? The South Carolina Human Affairs Commission has long recognized the fact that harmonious relationships within our communities have always been very important toward ensuring that a high quality of life is available to everyone, regardless of his or her position in life. Community Relations Councils are tasked to help foster better relationships with a community and organized efforts to bring together cross-sections of people to resolve disputes involving housing issues, education, business practices, and beyond.

Photo: Senator Tim Scott, Michael Haley, and Governor Nikki Haley participate at the funeral service for Senator Clementa Pinckney

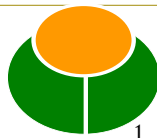
“We are a strong and faithful state. We love our state, we love our country, and most importantly we love each other.” - Governor Nikki Haley



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AGENCY NEWS

SCHAC's Good Work!

SCHAC staff members love to give back! In fact, each month, a team is dispatched from headquarters to Transitions in downtown Columbia. At Transitions, a United Way support agency, SCHAC employees serve lunch to the homeless. Many employees take advantage of this great volunteer opportunity, which is organized each month by Employment Investigator, Shelton Lorick. In addition to staff giving their lunch hour to this important local charity, SCHAC staff have been consistently dedicated to the annual United Way Giving Program. In fact, SCHAC consistently ranks among the highest in per capita giving for all state agencies, and in years past has received the Gold Award for excellence in giving and the Community Spirit Award.



From left to right, on April 15: LaTarnya Whitmire, Shetara Williams, Shelton Lorick, Laura Herrera, Uricoechea, Rosemary Drake, Nikki Owens, & Cherry Dow

Your thoughts, words and deeds are painting the world around you. -Jewel Diamond Taylor

April is Fair Housing Month

In April, we came together as a community and a nation to celebrate the anniversary of the passing of the Fair Housing Act and recommit to that goal which inspired us in the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination in 1968: to eliminate housing discrimination and create equal opportunity in every community.

Commissioner Buxton received on behalf of SCHAC a proclamation from Richland County Council during Fair Housing Month. Because of your dedication, our communities are open and welcoming, free from housing discrimination and hostility. SCHAC Housing staff, we salute you on the work you do daily to further housing choices for all Americans.

Fair Housing is a key component of insuring civil rights for our citizens and residents. For questions about our Fair Housing Division, please contact our office at (803) 737-7800.

Public Accommodations and “90 e”

Public accommodations discrimination complaints may be filed on the basis of:
*Race *Color *Religion *National Origin

Non-employment discrimination complaints/90(e) may be filed on the basis of:
*Race *Color *Religion *Age *Sex *National Origin *Disability

You must file within 180 days of the date of the alleged violation.

If you suspect that you have been discriminated against, it is important to act quickly. As soon as you feel you have been discriminated against, write down everything that happened. Having good documentation helps our investigation.

NAT FULLER'S FEAST

USC's McKissick Museum hosted a feast commemorating Nat Fuller on Sunday evening, April 19, in the McCutchen house on the Horseshoe.

Photo Credit:
C Michael Bergen / The State

Nat Fuller's Feast is a commemorative event that reflects on the significance of the original celebratory dinner hosted by Fuller at his restaurant, the Bachelor's Retreat, in April 1865. Fuller was an African American chef, highly renowned for his culinary creations. Wanting to bring about reconciliation following the Civil War, Fuller hosted an integrated dinner in Charleston, which was extremely successful. Fuller's celebratory dinner marked the end of the American Civil War and the end of slavery. It signified hope for racial equality, and featured Fuller's masterful culinary skills, which drew from a long legacy of African American cooks in Charleston. It marked a rare occasion, and possibly the first time following the Civil War, where blacks and whites sat together socially at the table, breaking bread together in unity.

On April 19, several Feasts statewide recreated the original Feast of 1865, and Commissioner Ray Buxton, as well as Deputy Commissioner Dan Koon, were in attendance by invitation at the Feast in Columbia. Many other dignitaries and leaders attended the Feasts across the state, and SCHAC was proud to be a part of this unifying event.



JUDY COLLINS HARRIS APRIL 30, 2015

Judy was an Accountant for the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission for over forty years. Judy enjoyed her family, friends and travel. She was a fashion queen and a social butterfly! She was a charter member of the Columbia Chapter of Chums, Incorporated, serving as its first president, and she was an active member of Jack and Jill for over thirty years. Judy enjoyed antiquing and preserving family heirlooms. She loved her friends from around the world and considered them God's gifts.



IN MEMORIAM

LT. COL. RICHARD A. CHARLES JUNE 23, 2015

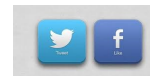
Richard "Rick" Charles was an investigator for the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission. He was married to Miranda Miller Charles, and graduated from USC. Rick was an avid and enthusiastic Gamecock sports fan. Additionally, Rick retired from the United States Army and served in the Vietnam War. As an investigator, Rick was efficient and versatile, having worked in the Employment and Housing divisions of the Agency. Rick worked with SCHAC for over ten years.



SOUTH CAROLINA HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION



Commissioner Raymond Buxton, II



Our mission is to eliminate and prevent unlawful discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations and promote harmony and betterment in the lives of South Carolina's residents.

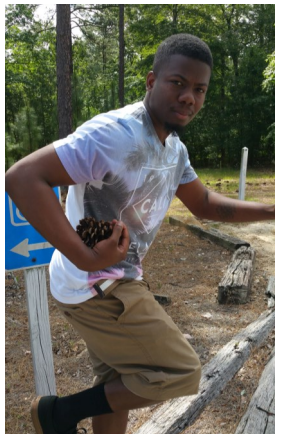
Si usted piensa que ha sido discriminado en la vivienda o en el empleo, debe ponerse en contacto con la Comisión de Asuntos Humanos. La Comisión investigará su queja y si hay una violación de la ley, la Comisión puede ayudarle a conseguir soluciones legales a los que usted tiene derecho. Si es necesario, la Comisión puede llevar casos de discriminación a una audiencia o a la corte. No importa su estado legal, la Comisión lo ayuda.

Cheryl F. C. Ludlam, 1st Dist.
Rev. Willie A. Thompson, 4th Dist.

Annual Employee Appreciation



Pictured above from left to right: Joshua Barr, Betty Dennis (Ms. Congeniality), Lee Ann Rice, and Marvin Caldwell (Mr. Congeniality).



Davon Reaves
former NFL player!



Scavenger Hunt Winning Team!

From left to right: Andrew Blankenship, Jesse Olivares (sitting), Davon Reaves, Joshua Barr (not a member of the team), Nikki Owens, and Jawanda Collier. You could not stop this team, Joshua!

Funeral for S.C. State Senator Clementa Pinckney draws thousands

"As a nation, out of this terrible tragedy, God has visited grace upon us for he has allowed us to see where we've been blind," President Obama said. "He's given us the chance, where we've been lost, to find our best selves."



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